Cornwall, Vt
April 22, 1850

My Dear Son

We all remain as when you left, but what can be said in reference to that, five or ten years hence, no one can pretend to foretell, we may be, some of us, or even all of us, mouldering in the silent tomb, where there is no device or knowledge or wisdom, suppose we were calculating on a journey to a very far distant land, never to return, and suppose the day was set, one week for the setting out, and suppose we had made no preparation for the intended journey, not even examined the road, or the way, to the country, to which we were going, much less to the obstacles which lie in the way, What would be said of such procedure, should we not be pronounced stark mad or insane, and yet we are on a journey to that land from which no traveler returns, and have we looked on the map of that country, have we looked at the way-marks, or the history, or the geography, I think you carried with you a chart of the country I am trying to paint you to. Look at the history of the country, and its inhabitants, it is said there is no night there, but the Glory of the Lord is the light of it It is said the streets are of pure gold, and the Kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it, of the inhabitants, that there is nevermore pain, nevermore sorrow, nevermore tears, nevermore parting with friends, nevermore strife, nevermore litigation, nevermore supplanting nevermore undermining, and nevermore farewell, The weary traveller with eager hope, renews his energies to reach his far distant home, and should not those who are beset on every side, with the evils, I have mentioned, with ye long, and direct earnestly desire a better inheritance, Eternal rest

from what I have said, would it not be wise my son, to examine the chart referd to, more closely, and see whether there be a better life, and whether this life, is but an embryo of a life which will never cease to be, will it continue through interminable ages, and in what condition, will it be filled up with turmoil sorrow and death, or with joy, that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, These are questions which the directory you have in your hands will decide, will you bestow more attention to it, if it be any thing, it is every thing, and truly that, on which, hangs our eternal destiny.

But I must close with a few things and remarks Theeben is now in Boston, he went there with a very fine pair of horses to market, the cars go from Burlington to Boston a little short of a day, that is, from Boston, starting at six in the morning, they arrive in Middlebury at five so, that we can have corn from Boston every day,

Jonathan was up in January as I suppose William wrote you and said he would be up again this summer, I told him you had intimated the intention of being at home at commencement, if so I would write him, so that you might both be at home the same time, will you calculate to do so, the time of commencement is changed to the former time, which I believe was the 16th of August, Lucretia is in Bakersfield at school, we are building a very nice school house in this District, it will be finished the middle of May

I have nothing further at present, but wish you would write, let us know about your matters, and how the slavery question has terminated or whether it is at all settled, and am your affectionate parent

S A Merrill

Cornwall April 21 /10

The weather up to this time has been very cold, and the spring very backward and a great cry for hay its worth $ and 10 pr ton